

As part of the expansion, ornamental highway signs are being pre-wired to accommodate future technology upgrades intended to improve traffic flow. This City-initiated aesthetic refinement of the highway is one of many ways Sugar Land differentiates itself from other communities that border U.S. highways. It is a continuation of a theme that the City pays attention to every detail – Sugar Land is a great place to live, shop and base a business. The signage will include pillars with etched indentations and a star and crown that complement the overall aesthetic features of the highway. Other City upgrades include ornamental traffic signals at intersections along U.S. 59, which will also include grassy slopes rising from the frontage roads to the retaining walls. Probably the most distinguishing aesthetic enhancements are the etched freeway columns proudly displaying a star and crown, a clear indication to motorists that they are traveling through Sugar Land. The star and crown are the two most prominent elements of the City's seal. These features, similar to the signage pillars, are located at major intersections along the freeway.



► U.S. 59 FROM STATE HIGHWAY 6 TO U.S. 99

Pending environmental clearances, construction is expected to begin during 2004 on the expansion of U.S. 59 from State Highway 6 to State Highway 99 (the Grand Parkway), a project funded one year ahead of schedule. The expansion will widen the roadway to four main lanes in each direction, with an HOV/diamond lane and continuous three-lane frontage roads along the entire segment. This improvement will also include new frontage road bridges over the Brazos River, which will greatly benefit commuters during incidents that adversely impact traffic on the main lane bridge. In addition, the bridge structures at Sweetwater Boulevard and University Boulevard will be reconstructed.

- **Top:** To celebrate the opening of the new U.S. 59 main lanes, an expansion celebration that included local, state and federal officials who worked together on the vital mobility project was held May 28, 2003.
- **Bottom:** Sugar Land's portion of U.S. 59 includes many signature features, such as the decorative signals at each major intersection.

■ TREK EXPRESS

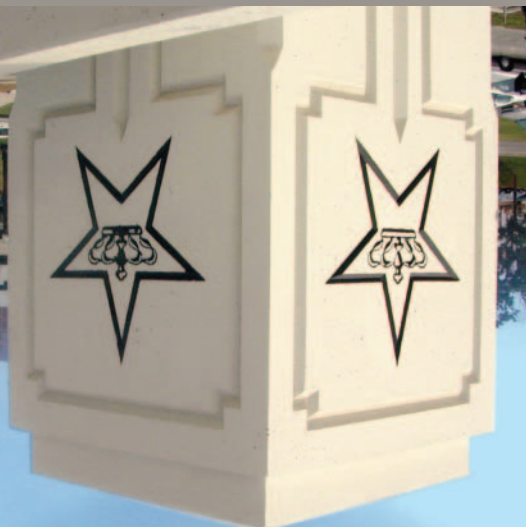
Get a jump on your workweek or read the newspaper during rush hour with Trek Express.

Round-trip shuttle transportation is available from AMC First Colony Theatres and the U of H at Sugar Land park-and-ride lot to the Westwood park-and-ride lot (Bissonnet and 59 South) and/or Greenway Plaza.

- The TREK PLAZA GREENWAY EXPRESS operates every 20 minutes from each lot from 5:20 a.m. to 8:20 a.m. and from 3:15 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.
- Purchase 40- and 20-ride ticket books from Kroger on Sweetwater or from TREK.
- Exact cash fares of \$2 from AMC and \$1.75 from West Bellfort are also accepted.

For additional information, contact TREK at (713) 965-1711 or visit TREK's Web site at www.trekexpress.org.

TREK is the non-profit transportation management organization.



► STATE HIGHWAY 6 TO SUGAR CREEK BOULEVARD

After four years of construction, motorists are now able to travel at posted speed limits along Sugar Land's stretch of U.S. 59. As construction continues, the current limit is 55 miles per hour. Earlier this year, the state completed its main lane expansion on this three-and-a-half-mile stretch of freeway, which now includes a total of eight continuous northbound and southbound main lanes from State Highway 6 to southwest Houston. As part of this project, capacity was improved at all major intersections under the freeway, including u-turns allowing drivers to bypass traffic signals. (continued inside)

U.S. Highway 59 Expansion Project Update 2003: A Project of the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)

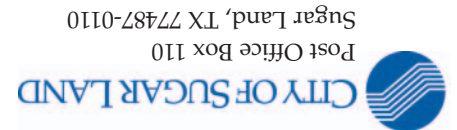
Partnership for Progress



City of Sugar Land U.S. 59 Hotline 281-276-9959
(or visit www.sugarlandtx.gov)
TxDOT Public Information Hotline 713-802-5074
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► **HOV/DIAMOND LANE**

The U.S. 59 project includes an extra wide High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV)/diamond lane on the free-way in each direction. These lanes, which are expected to open by the end of 2003, encourage rideshar-ing and reduce travel times by permitting vehicles carrying two or more people to use these exclusive lanes. The HOV lanes in Sugar Land will contain no barrier separation from adjacent freeway lanes but are marked with HOV diamond lane pavement mark-ings. Large overhead signs will alert motorists where to enter and exit the HOV lanes, which will be in use 24 hours per day. To the user of an HOV lane, the benefits are readily apparent. Lower traffic volume on the HOV lane, as compared to the main lanes, will allow HOV commuters to travel at higher speeds from Sugar Land through Stafford to Houston. Overall travel time for work, shopping, and recre-ational trips is reduced. Second, sharing a ride or using transit reduces the costs related to operating and maintaining a personal vehicle.



► **U.S. 59/U.S. 90A INTERCHANGE:**

STATE TARGETS 2003

Completion of the U.S. 59/U.S. 90A interchange is expected by the end of 2003, as well as continuous frontage roads from Kirkwood to Sugar Creek Boulevard. When completed, drivers will be able to exit U.S. 59 to frontage roads that adjoin U.S. 90A. This tri-level interchange, similar in layout to Beltway 8 and U.S. 90A, will feature:

- U.S. 59 at the top level;
- depressed frontage roads at the lower level; and
- U.S. 90A main lanes and railroad tracks at ground level.

During this project, periodic lane shifts and non-rush hour lane closures on U.S. 90A will be the norm.

► **U.S. 59 BEAUTIFICATION**

In accordance with Sugar Land's Urban Beautification Policy, the City will install landscaping improvements along U.S. 59 in cooperation with TxDOT's Landscape Cost Share Program. The landscaping, which will be added following the completion of the highway's expansion, will include a variety of trees, shrubs and flowers, with more concentrated arrange-ments located at intersections along the highway.

Phase I of the landscaping improvements, between Williams Trace and State Highway 6, will be installed in early 2004. Phase II (Williams Trace to State Highway 90A) is still in design.

● **Right:** Ornamental sign structures along U.S. 59 will compliment the decorative columns located at major intersections.



► **COUNTDOWN TO COMPLETION**

U.S. 59 Milestones to Celebrate

- New U.S. 59 main lanes opened from Kirkwood to Highway 6.
- All major intersections under U.S. 59 were reconstructed, increasing the number of approach lanes and feeder roads along U.S. 59.
- Construction funding for the U.S. 59 expansion to the Grand Parkway was approved, accelerating the project.
- Aesthetic improvements distinguish Sugar Land's stretch of highway as unique in the greater metropolitan area and in Texas.

Milestones on the Horizon

- Late 2003: HOV/diamond lanes to open between Kirkwood and Highway 6.
- Late 2003: Continuous frontage roads between Kirkwood and Sugar Creek Boulevard, including U.S. 90A main lanes and the railroad crossing, will be completed.
- 2004: U.S. 59 expansion from Highway 6 to the Grand Parkway to begin.
- Future: The state plans to install traffic management systems on U.S. 59 similar to those operated by TranStar on all other freeways in the metropolitan area.

In tandem with the U.S. 59 expansion, Sugar Land continues to make improvements to alternate routes.

Other Mobility Projects on the Horizon

- Construction on University Boulevard is expected to be finished by fall 2003, according to TxDOT. When complete, the four-lane, curb-and-gutter roadway will extend from U.S. 59 to Commonwealth Boulevard. As part of the project, a 14-foot-wide hike-and-bike trail/pedestrian walkway will be included on the west side of University Boulevard adjacent to U of H and the City's parkland.
- Construction is underway on West Airport Boulevard between Eldridge Road and Burney Road. This project will result in a four-lane, curb-and-guttered road to be opened later this fall. Two lanes are open, with the remaining two lanes scheduled to open in October.
- Design is underway on Highway 6 between First Colony Boulevard/Brooks Street to north of U.S. 90A. This project will expand Highway 6 from four lanes to six lanes and will include a bridge over U.S. 90A, the railroad tracks and University Boulevard. Construction could begin as early as 2004.
- Design has begun on the expansion of U.S. 90A through Sugar Land.